



Ten Steps to Success for Small Businesses

Office of Small Business Programs
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Step 1: Identify Your Product or Service

- Determine the specific classification code(s) the Government uses under solicitations
for the types of products and services your firm is capable of providing
 - ✓ **Federal Supply Classification (FSC) Codes** -
www.acquisition.gov/service_product_codes.pdf
 - ✓ **North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Codes**
-
www.census.gov/naics
- After pinpointing the FSC and NAICS codes that correspond to your business line,
enter them when registering as a Federal vendor (see **Step 2**) and when conducting
online searches for available Government contracting opportunities (see **Step 3**)
- Size Standards and NAICS Codes
 - Every solicitation issued by the Federal Government is assigned a NAICS code by the
Procuring Contracting Officer responsible for releasing the solicitation

Step 2: Register Your Company

- Does your firm qualify as a small business?
 - For Federal size regulations refer to [13 C.F.R. Part 121](#)
 - For Federal rules regarding affiliation refer to [13 C.F.R. Part 121.103](#)
- Does your firm fall under one or more socioeconomic subcategories?
 - SMALL DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS
 - “8(a)” BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM ENROLLEE (requires SBA certification)
 - WOMAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESS
 - HUBZone SMALL BUSINESS (requires SBA certification)
 - VETERAN-OWNED and SERVICE DISABLED VETERAN-OWNED SMALL BUSINESS

Visit www.sba.gov for explanations and supplemental materials on each subcategory
- Websites for Government Contractor Registration
 - ✓ **Central Contractor Registry (CCR)** - www.ccr.gov
 - ✓ **Online Representations and Certifications (ORCA)** - orca.bpn.gov

Step 3: Locate Contracting Opportunities

▪ Contracting Opportunity Websites

✓ **Federal Business Opportunities** , or “FedBizOpps” - www.fbo.gov

- All Solicitations Valued Over \$25,000
- Award Notices
- Sources-Sought Notices
- Special Notices, (e.g., regarding Industry Days applicable to a specific acquisition)
- Small Business Central Events Listing

✓ TACOM LCMC Procurement Network (ProcNet) - contracting.tacom.army.mil

▪ Common criteria used in online searches and queries for opportunities include...

- FSC or NAICS code
- Solicitation type (e.g., set-aside for small businesses)
- Procurement agency (e.g., US Army TACOM LCMC)
- Product or service keyword (use Government terminology, and experiment to isolate

Step 4: Zero-In on Target Markets

- From www.fbo.gov and other contracting opportunity websites (**Step 3**), identify the Federal procurement agencies that buy a lot of what you sell

- Make regular use of each targeted agency's procurement website, for example the

TACOM LCMC "ProcNet" whose unique features are highlighted below

- **US Army TACOM LCMC ProcNet** - contracting.tacom.army.mil
 - Comprehensive "doing business" tip sheets on
- Open solicitations
- Information on major buys (e.g., Industry Day notices) - wide-ranging topics for small businesses
- Awarded contracts - Lists of prime contractors
- Acquisition forecasts (manufacturers,
- Market survey notices - service/IT providers, construction
- Qualified supplier guidance (firms)

- Registration tool for available
- For agency-specific information and assistance contact a Small Business Specialist - Conference and event announcements within the agency's Office of Small Business Programs

- Federal OSBP List - <http://www.osdbu.gov/offices.html>

- Army SB Specialist Search Tool

Step 5: Investigate Special Programs

Websites for Federal Programs

- General Services Administration (GSA) Schedules Program - www.gsa.gov
- Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program - www.sbir.gov

Websites for Defense Department and Army Programs

- DoD Email Program - www.dscc.dla.mil/programs/email
- Mentor-Protégé Program - www.acq.osd.mil/osbp/mentor_protege
- Computer Hardware, Enterprise Software and Solutions (CHESS) Program -
<https://chess.army.mil/>
- Soldier Product Improvement (SPI) Program -
<https://peosoldier.army.mil/newpeo/feedback/spi.asp>

Websites for TACOM LCMC Programs

- Diminishing Manufacturing Sources and Material Shortages (DMSMS) Program -
www.dmsms-tardec-army.com
- Manufacturing Technical Assistance Production Program (MTAPP) -
<http://armymtapp.us/>
- Ground Vehicle Gateway for Innovations -

Step 6: Pursue Subcontracting Opportunities

▪ Subcontracting Opportunity Websites

- ✓ SBA Sub-Net - www.sba.gov/subnet
- ✓ DoD Subcontracting Directory - www.acq.osd.mil/osbp/doing_business/
- ✓ DoD Prime Contract Descriptions - www.defense.gov/contracts
- ✓ TACOM LCMC Prime Contractor Lists -
<http://contracting.tacom.army.mil/sbo/sbo.htm>

- After targeting a prime contractor make maximum use of its supplier website, for

instance that of the Oshkosh Corp. and its Oshkosh Defense Systems

whose respective key features are

Oshkosh Corporate Purchasing

www.oskgpsc.net

- Supplier development information
- Purchasing POCs by commodity
- Online supplier registration
- Small Business Liaison Officer (SBLO) contact information

GDLS Supply Chain Management

www.gdls.com/suppliersoverview

- Supplier manual
- “iSupplier” instructions for online quoting
- Online supplier registration
- Small Business Liaison Officer (SBLO) contact information

Step 7: Learn the Rules of Gov't Contracting

- Be aware of what sets Government contracting apart from commercial contracting
 - Regulation and policy dictate all of the Government's contracting procedures
 - Exceptions to competition are strictly controlled in Government contracting
 - Competitive Government solicitations must be publicized nationally
 - Any semblance of favoritism in Government - industry interactions is strictly forbidden
 - The Government buys products, not processes or the potential to produce
 - Before awarding a contract to an offeror the Government will assesses its performance history and delivery capability
- Regulatory and Policy Websites
 - Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) - www.acquisition.gov/far
 - Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy (DPAP) - www.acq.osd.mil/dpap
- Other Web Resources

Step 8: Know the Players in Gov't Contracting

▪ Standard Participants in the Procurement Process

- PROCURING CONTRACTING OFFICER (PCO) ...releases solicitations and awards contracts
- PROGRAM MANAGER ...develops acquisition plans and oversees acquisition programs
- SMALL BUSINESS SPECIALIST ...screens all upcoming solicitations as set-aside candidates
- SBA PROCUREMENT CENTER REPRESENTATIVE ...also reviews solicitations for set-aside suitability, and can challenge PCO procurement strategy decisions
- COMPETITION ADVOCATE ...promotes competition and challenges barriers to it
- ADMINISTRATIVE CONTRACTING OFFICER (ACO) ...monitors contractual performance

What SB Specialists cannot do

- Act on your direct behalf, in a manner

- Your initial go-to person for contracting advice and guidance at any Federal procurement agency is the Small Business Specialist

What SB Specialists can do for you

- ✓ Discuss the extent that your capabilities are the province of the buyer and PCO)

Step 9: Seek Advice, Assistance and Insights

General Assistance and Information Websites

- Association of Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTACs) - www.aptac-us.org
- Association of Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) - www.asbdc-us.org
- Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) - www.score.org
- SBA Financial Assistance Program - www.sba.gov/financialassistance
- Federal Business Gateway - www.business.gov
- Senate Small Business Committee - sbc.senate.gov
- House Small Business Committee - www.house.gov/smbiz/

Non-Government Organization Websites

- National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA) - www.ndia.org
- Institute for Defense and Government Advancement (IDGA) - www.idga.org
- Association of the U.S. Army (AUSA) - www.ausa.org
- SAE International - www.sae.org
- National Center for Defense Manufacturing and Machining (NCDMM) - www.ncdmm.org

Step 10: Market Your Firm

- Develop handouts, starting with a “company resume” of one to two pages, that are customized to your targeted Government market(s)
 - Make clear what your firm’s size and socioeconomic status is
 - Focus on **product over process**; define the specific items or services your company can provide, and identify applicable FSC and NAICS codes
 - Cite the GSA schedule(s) your firm is an approved source under
 - List your current major customers, and describe any notable business successes and accomplishments
- Be proactive...respond to market survey notices, register as a supplier wherever possible, attend Industry Days, and take full advantage of your local PTAC and other resources to enhance your competitiveness (see **Steps 4-6** and **Step 9**)
- Attend conferences and other forums to engage in face-to-face marketing